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Summary of the discussion concerning the issues relevant to the recommendations of the AIETD - 6 August 1997

At the trilateral meeting on 6 August, Ambassadors Neves and Wisnumurti gave their preliminary reactions to the series of questions submitted by Ambassador Marker earlier in the day regarding the implementation of two recommendations made by the AIETD in March 1996.

I. Establishment of an East Timorese cultural centre in Dili

1. Financing of the centre

Both sides were of the view that the funding should come from contributions from all interested Governments and NGOs.

2. Mechanism for channeling the funds

Portugal indicated its preference for the setting up of a UN Fund for this purpose, but that, at a minimum, the fund should be international. Indonesia suggested that the fund should be managed by Indonesia, Portugal and the UN. Portugal did not want to rule out the possibility of including other contributors.

3. Aims and purposes of the centre

There was consensus that this should be elaborated by the AIETD.

4. Portuguese language and culture as an element of the centre's functions

This was contained in the 1996 recommendation of the AIETD. Both sides felt it could be further elaborated by the AIETD.

5. Body to establishment and manage the centre

The common view was that the establishment and management of the centre should be left to the East Timorese, but the next AIETD meeting should be asked to elaborate concrete ideas on this point. Portugal suggested that the AIETD should set up a committee specifically to take charge of this issue and the tripartite talks should establish a similar committee to deal with this matter.

6. Body to oversee the operation and management of the centre

Ambassador Marker suggested that there should be a system of approval and accountability. The East Timorese management should submit its proposals and projects for approval by a Board. Indonesia noted that while the day-to-day operation and administration should be left to the East Timorese, the tripartite talks should set out the basic ground rules. It also noted the need to take into account the work of Indonesian Governmental bodies in the areas of culture and education, and the need to have a system of coordination between them and the proposed cultural centre. Portugal acknowledged the need for avoiding duplication but stressed that the centre was meant to be an independent East Timorese institution and should be allowed to make its own decisions.

7. Assistance of UN specialized agencies

Indonesia said it was open to the idea of agencies like the UNDP and UNESCO assisting the centre. Ambassador Marker said that the UN would explore various areas in which the agencies could assist, including the channeling of resources.

II. Portuguese Assistance for East Timor's human resources development

1. Form of assistance (governmental or non-governmental)

Portugal indicated that it might provide the assistance from governmental sources to be chanalled through NGOs.

2. Lead institution in East Timor to coordinate this effort

Indonesia stated that this function belonged to its Governmental arms in East Timor, while Portugal observed that the University of East Timor or NGOs and similar institutions could be given this task. Both sides felt that the question should be referred to the AIETD.

3. Identification of need areas, designing projects, desirability of assistance of UN specialized agencies, practical arrangements for delivering such assistance.

The consensus was that these should also be left to the AIETD to elaborate.